



## **FUMC PORTSMOUTH A RECONCILING CONGREGATION**

We, the congregation of the First United Methodist Church of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, are dedicated to worshipping, learning, and serving with all people as we embrace Jesus Christ's message of love and acceptance. As a United Methodist Church we stand fully behind the statement "Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors". We celebrate our diversity and invite all persons regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, marital or socioeconomic status, nationality, physical or mental ability into full membership and participation in the life of this community of faith.



### **New England Annual Conference Tri-State District**

The Rev. Sudarshana Devadhar, Bishop

The Rev. James McPhee, District Superintendent

### **FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

129 Miller Avenue - Portsmouth, NH 03801

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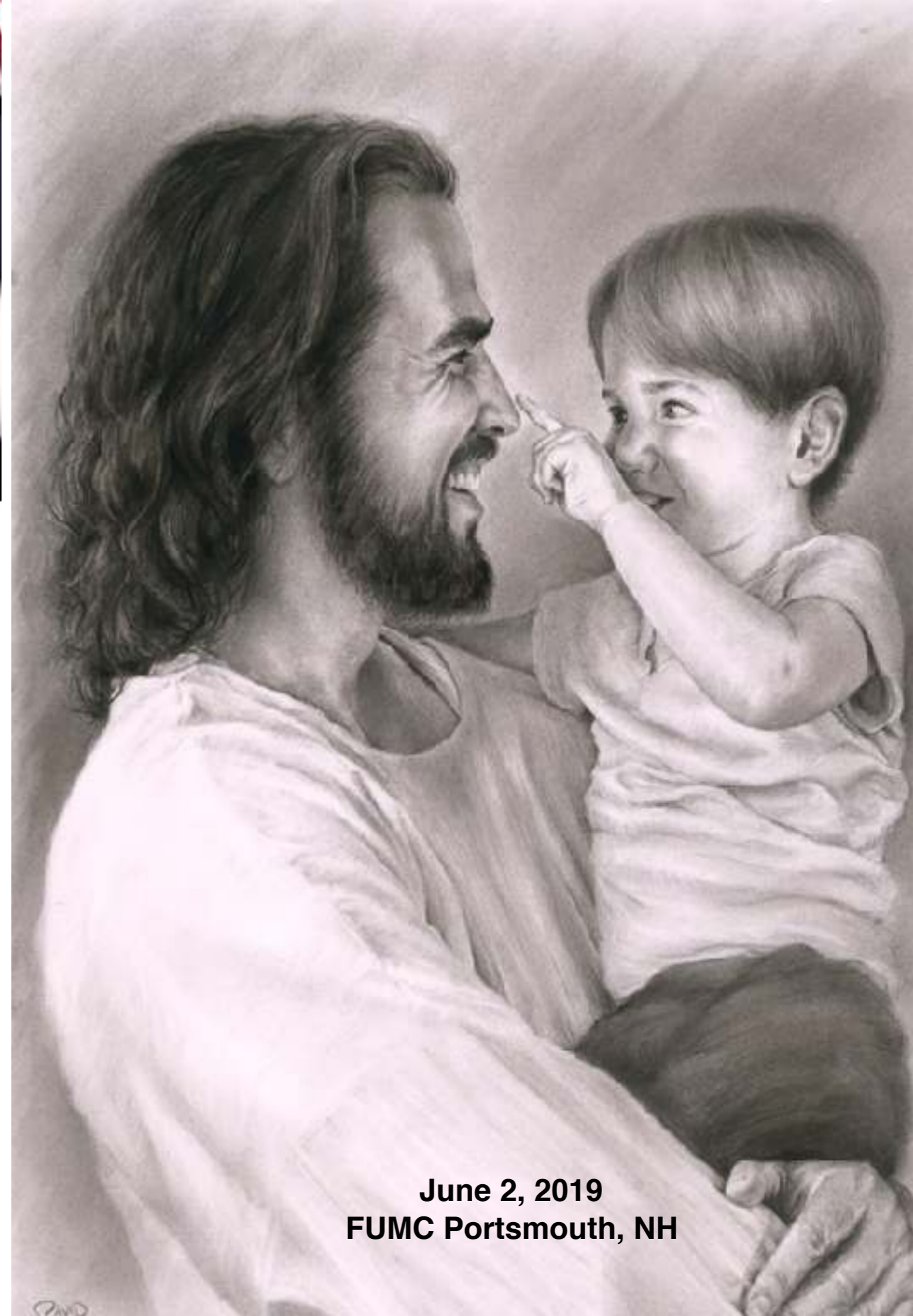
Pastor office hours - Tuesday and Thursday 9 am - 12 pm

[call to ensure availability]

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson

Check out our website at [www.fumcportsmouth.com](http://www.fumcportsmouth.com)

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**June 2, 2019  
FUMC Portsmouth, NH**

We Gather for Worship

**Prelude & Entrance of Christ's Light**

**Celebrations**

**\*Call to Worship**

L: Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me..."

**P: We come, each of us a child of God.**

L: Jesus said, "It is to such as these that the reign of God belongs."

**P: We come to recognize that each child is already part of God's kingdom.**

**\*Hymn:** "Jesus Loves Me" UMH #191

**A Time for the Child in all of Us**

**Prayer** (unison)

**Gracious God, Jesus welcomed and blessed the children so freely. Yet we often forget that we are all children. We become too "grown up" to come to you with the humility and trust we see in our kids. We withhold your blessing from others, because we get too wrapped up in ourselves. Please forgive us for willful rebellion and passive neglect. Lord, in our best moments, we realize how much we need you. Through the Holy Spirit, please manifest your presence, and bless others through us. In Jesus' Name. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

L: Hear the good news! Because God loves us, we lack for nothing; because God forgives us, we have everything we need; because God surrounds us with sisters and brothers, we do not journey alone.

**ALL: Committing everything to God, trusting in the One who redeems us, we decide to live as God's faithful and forgiven people. Amen.**

**Sung Response:** "O Lord, Hear My Prayer" TFWS #2200  
**Ministry of Music**

We Proclaim the Word

**Reading the Word:** Psalm 128; Mark 10:13-16

L: The Word of God for the People of God.

**P: Thanks be to God.**

**Message:** "Our Children"

We Respond to God's Word

**\*Hymn:** "Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters" UMH #605

**Concerns and Joys**

**Silent Prayer and Pastoral Prayer**

**The Lord's Prayer** (unison)

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not in temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**Gratitude Moment**

**John VanReenen**

**Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings**

**\*Doxology:** (*Please join in singing the following:*) UMH #94

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

**\*Prayer of Dedication** (unison)

**Almighty God, thank you for speaking to us through your Son, and for making us your daughters and sons. Lead us to live holy lives as your holy people. Help us to show kindness and respect to others, and to serve all those in need. Amen.**

**A Service of Holy Communion - insert**

We Go Forth to Serve

**\*Hymn:** "The Family Prayer Song" TFWS #2188

**\*Choral Benediction** (*Congregation encircles the Sanctuary*)

**May the Lord, gracious God bless and keep you forever. Grant you peace, perfect peace, courage in every endeavor. Lift up your eyes and seek His face, and His grace forever. May the Lord, mighty God bless and keep you forever.**

**\*Pastor's Charge**

*\*Please stand as you are comfortable*

**Postlude**

*UMH = United Methodist Hymnal TFWS = The Faith We Sing  
Large print bulletins are available from the greeters*

## Welcome!

Whether you are joining us for worship for the first time or after many years of attending here at First UMC, we want you to know that you are welcome!

We are an inclusive community that invites everyone to be part of our church fellowship. Thank you for being here, and we hope that you have had a meaningful experience of worshipping our God so you leave this place feeling that you have been blessed to be a blessing. Please join us again!

Rev. Deb Hanson



Pastor - Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson  
Pastor's Assistant - David Richards  
Liturgist - Dave Richards  
Lay Leader - Susan Sarosiek  
Director of Music - Bevan Bloemendaal  
Acolyte - Marilyn Stebbins  
Greeters - Jane Richards & Marilyn Stebbins  
Ushers - Ken & Jenya Westbrook  
Sunday School - Sue R, Kaya, Aerial, Rosie, Dave A.  
Sound Tech - Sue Sarosiek  
Worship Service Tech - Steve Scott  
Photographer - Dave Atkinson

# The Power Of Prayer

**If** you  
**will**  
**ask**

## WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER...

Gayle Gardei	Roseanne	Barbara & Jim Slater
Marion Collishaw	Rev. David Kerr	Barbara Sylvester
Sue Goodhue	Jim New	Pauline Boynton
Hunter Pinkley	Kim Hishop	Barbara Millar
Sylvia Bartlett	Bobbie Noble	Irene Derosier
Brian Thompson	Art Munson	Barbara Clement
Malia Broe	Pastor Sue Ellery	Joette MacKenzie
Gil Stebbins	Judy Doyon	Vicky Fernandez
Rev. Bill Gardei	Charles Gilman	Alissa Fernandez
Woodie Lange	Our Church Family	Gabor [Brianna's father in-law]
Barbara Chapman		Jessie

In Memory of John T. "Papa" O'Connell  
as we celebrate his birthday,  
by the Langs



# Upcoming Events

Thank you so very much to our church family for the beautiful altar flowers recently in our honor. They brighten each day. Love and Blessings, Barbara and Jim Slater.

Our wonderful Alexa Langs is having a birthday! She invited us all to help her collect food for Gather, our local food pantry. Thank you for bringing your food donations to church these past two weeks to help her with her gift to Gather. Thanks!

**SFP CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT Monday, June 3rd** at Pease Golf Course...Open to all! Win a Subaru Assent courtesy of Exeter Subaru. Silent auction, games, history of golf hole special and more. Registration underway on [seacoastfamilypromise.org](http://seacoastfamilypromise.org)

The next **Finance Trustees** meeting will be held on **6/4**, at 6:00 pm at the Parsonage.

On Sunday, June 9, we will celebrate **Pentecost** as well as our Sunday school. Our children will share some of the things they enjoyed learning this year, and they will also present the Pentecost story in a dramatic reading with the congregation participating. We will thank our teachers, as well. You are invited to wear **RED** if you wish!

We are looking to do summer Sunday school, and it would be nice to have some new folks teach the children during the months of July and August to give our teachers a break. If you are interested or feel called to help, please let Rev. Deb know.

## UMC Market Place

<https://umcmarket.org/>

Do you shop on line? Have you ever heard of UMC Market Place? This is a place where you can shop on line with places like Staples, Bed, Bath, and Beyond, Travelocity, and many other online stores, and when you go through the UMC Market.org, a percentage will be sent to the church. It's a great way to do fundraising with what you are already doing! To learn more, visit the website above and read about how it works, then sign up using First UMC, Portsmouth as the benefiting church. If you have any questions, please ask Rev. Deb.

## Fundraising Ideas

Do you love **Texas Roadhouse Rolls**? Would you be interested in participating in a Fundraiser. This would consist of taking orders and distributing your orders upon delivery. Please let Rev Deb know you'd participate.

Would you participate in a **Flatbread Pizza** fundraiser? Once assigned a date, would you go have a flatbread and spread the word for our fundraiser night? Please Let Rev Deb know your interest. Thank you.

Thank you for all your **Grateful Heart Pledges**. If you would like to make a pledge, cards are available from the Greeters. Please put in offering plate.

Our D.S. Rev. Jim McPhee's Retirement Celebration is here at FUMC on 6/9. **Volunteers needed.** Please see Dave Richards for more information.



**Come join us for coffee hour after the church service in Sanborn Hall...we'd love to catch up with you and see how your week has gone.**



DO THIS IN  
**REMEMBRANCE**  
OF ME.

**Living for Jesus Communion Service**  
Adapted from a service by Carol Penner

Invitation

L: You are invited to the table of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here we have a feast for the people of God, a sign of Jesus' body and blood given in love to save us. Men, Women, and Children, all who have committed their lives to Jesus are welcome to take the bread and juice to sustain them on their journey of faith.

When you come forward, please take the bread and hold it, and then dip it into the juice as a symbol of the body and blood of Christ.

Words of Institution

On the night he was handed over, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, and after giving thanks to God, broke it and gave it to his disciples. He said, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

After supper Jesus took the cup; and after giving thanks, gave it to them and said, "Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, remember me.



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Let's pray together:

**God of grace, we give you thanks for this bread, and your son Jesus Christ who came to save us. The love of Jesus shines through the years, his death on the cross, his broken body has become the bread of life which sustains us. As we eat this bread and drink this juice, remind us that we are part of his body, living for him, giving for him. Amen.**

L: God of grace, thank you for raising Jesus Christ from the dead, our hope for life eternal. Holy Spirit, fill us with your strength to be the body of Christ on earth, God's church in Laos and Los Angeles, in Hawaii and Havana, in Ethiopia and Edmonton, and here in this congregation, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Brothers and sisters, we remember the body of Christ, broken for us and the blood of Christ shed for us. Thank you, Jesus for loving us to the end of your life. We share the bread and cup remembering your sacrifice for our sins, your love which never ended, your love which sustains us still.

**ALL: Amen.**

It is in this bread and this cup that we remember Christ's love for us and receive forgiveness of sins and the commissioning to be the body of Christ together in this world. ALL are welcome to come to this table.

*Sharing the Bread and the Cup*

*Unison Prayer:*

Let us pray together:

**Give us strength to do the work you would have us do, to be the people you would have us be. And most of all, give us hope as we wait together to see Jesus again. Amen.**

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SERMON GIVEN 6/2/19 BY  
REV. DR. DEB HANSON

SCRIPTURE: Mark 10:13-16

THEME: Jesus loves the vulnerable and powerless.

It may seem odd to us in our day and age to read this passage from Mark and hear that the disciples wanted to prevent children from going to Jesus. We know that children can be very active, noisy, and sometimes even pester us. We know they are sources of worry, anxiety, and challenges because we want to do what is best as parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, teachers, and leaders. And we also know that children are a source of our pride, incredible love, and more precious than we could ever imagine. So, why would the disciples try to keep the children away from Jesus, especially since even earlier in the gospel of Mark he had taught that we must be like children in order to enter the kingdom of God?

Sometimes, knowing the culture of Jesus' day helps us to understand better what is happening when we read scripture. In our 21<sup>st</sup> century, we value and lift up children, giving them opportunities to grow and learn and become people who make a difference in the world. Society during biblical times was very different from our experience. Children and women were seen as unimportant – as possessions, and the children were mostly considered to be nuisances. They were just supposed to be hidden away and out of sight until they grew up into adulthood. The women in the families raised the children to act properly and behave, and when the boys reached the age of twelve, they were considered ready for manhood – today we see the ceremony called Bar Mitzvah that recognizes this.

For Jesus to welcome children and rebuke the disciples for keeping them away, says a lot about Jesus and who was valuable in God's eyes. Jesus paid attention to children and women and the vulnerable of his society, giving them honor and respect. He loved the children. Years ago I watched a video called “The Gospel Road” produced by Johnny Cash and his wife June Carter Cash. While I don't remember a lot about the video except that it followed Jesus' life from birth to resurrection, there was a scene in it that always stands out in my mind.

In this scene, Jesus is on the beach playing with children, running in and out of the water, picking them up to hug them, and joyfully splashing around with them. It struck me and has stayed with me, as you can see. It was almost as powerful a statement to me as the cover for today's bulletin with some artist's depiction of Jesus and a child. This just warms my heart and reminds me of the great love Jesus has for everyone. We don't often see pictures of Jesus smiling or laughing, but there is so much love shown in this picture!





The love of God has been incarnated through Jesus whose message was that everyone, including the powerless and cast-asides, are part of God's family. EVERYONE is welcome. We are all loved for who we are as God's precious children. We are all welcome in God's house. It is sometimes hard to comprehend the depth of Jesus' love for us, but his death on the cross opened the doors for forgiveness, renewal, and life eternal. Our families are often the first place where we begin to learn about and experience love, which can reflect God's love for us.

One of my favorite stories about the love we humans show each other and reflect God's love to one another is about *John Todd, who was born in Rutledge, Vermont, into a family of several children. They later moved to the village of Killingsworth back in the early 1800s. And there, at a very young age, both John's parents died.*

*The relatives wondered what they would do with so many children, how they could parcel them out to other friends and relatives. One dear and loving aunt said she would take little John. The aunt sent a horse and a servant to get John, who was only six at the time.*

*The servant, Caesar, came and put the little boy on the back of the horse. On the way back an endearing conversation took place:  
John: Will she be there? Caesar: Oh, yes, she'll be there waiting up for you. John: Will I like living with her? Caesar: My son, you fall into good hands. John: Will she love me? Caesar: Ah, she has a big heart. John: Will I have my own room? Will she let me have a puppy?  
Caesar: She's got everything all set, son. I think she has some surprises, too. John: Do you think she'll go to bed before we get there?  
Caesar: Oh, no! She'll be sure to wait up for you. You'll see when we get out of these woods. You'll see her candle shining in the window.*

*When they got to the clearing, sure enough, there was a candle in the window and she was standing in the doorway. She reached down, kissed him, and said "Welcome home!" She fed him supper, took him to his room, and waited until he fell asleep. John Todd grew up to be a great minister of the gospel. But it was there at his aunt's, his new mother, that he grew up. It was always a place of enchantment because of his aunt. It awed him that she had given him a second home. She had become a second mother to him.*

*Years later, long after he had moved away, his aunt wrote to tell him of her impending death. Her health was failing and she wondered what was to become of her. This is what John Todd wrote her:*

*"My Dear Aunt, Years ago I left a house of death not knowing where I was to go, whether anyone cared, whether it was the end of me. The ride was long but Caesar encouraged me. Finally, he pointed out your candle to me, and there we were in the yard and you embraced me and took me by the hand into my own room that you had made up. After all these years I still can't believe it--how you did all that for me! I was expected; I felt safe in that room--so welcomed. It was my room. Now it's your turn to go, and as one who has tried it out, I'm writing to let you know that Someone is waiting up. Your room is all ready, the light is on, the door is open, and as you ride into the yard--don't worry, Auntie. You're expected! I know. I once saw God standing in your doorway--long go!"*

*(Illustrations Unlimited, pp. 377-378, #7)*

As a church family, we light that candle of hope to all God's children, and we offer that kind of hope to our children. Aren't we blessed to have them! Some of you may have realized by now that children are a huge priority in my ministry. When I went to Goodwins Mills years ago, I was asked if we should have a Sunday school. I asked how many children were there, and they said "two." My answer was, "Then we should have a Sunday school." We had teachers lined up, and the word got around eventually. By the time I left, we had about 15 children and two classrooms. Before I started here at First UMC, I received a slightly panicked email saying that we suddenly had a family with six children come to church, "Should we have Sunday school? What curriculum should we use?" I said "yes" and suggested a curriculum from our Cokesbury publishing house, so Sunday school started for them the next week.

In December, we had a wonderful pageant that the children presented and everyone enjoyed, and this next Sunday is not only Pentecost, but it is Children's Sunday when we celebrate their presence with us as part of the church. While Children are most certainly our future, they are also our present, a vital and important part of our identity right now. I think we all learn something from them during the children's time and when we engage them in conversation. They have much to offer and can offer words of wisdom, as well as the faith that we all can remember when we are talking about living with Christ in our lives. "We must have faith like a little child," Jesus said. In other words, asking questions, learning, being open to God's actions, and trusting that God is at work in our lives.

Maybe my favorite verse in this short passage from Mark is when Jesus takes the children up in his arms and blesses them. There is love, trust, and grace in this passage, and it always makes me feel the love of Jesus. We all can use that sense of being loved, no matter how old or young we are, no matter what our life's situation might be.

My great nephew Connor was born with Cerebral Palsy and learning disabilities. He has limited speech capabilities, but that doesn't mean he can't communicate! He has been learning sign language and receiving physical and speech therapy. At seven years old, he has made great progress toward walking, driving his motorized wheelchair, and winning the hearts of everyone he meets. Our family loves him because he is so precious, and we have learned a lot about God's love for us as well as acceptance of each other because of Connor's challenges. We understand even more how much God loves ALL of God's children.

So, I hope you will be here next Sunday to celebrate our kids who will be a big part of helping in the worship service. I hope you will be here next Sunday to celebrate the birthday of the church at Pentecost (and you can wear something with the color red if you wish). As we celebrate the Church of Jesus Christ, may we remember again and again that WE are the church. WE are God's children who are called to care for one another, build each other up, provide learning and leadership opportunities for our children, and send each other into the world to make a difference in the ways we act and speak. Maybe it's helpful to ask, "How am I reflecting Christ to the world?" "Are my actions treating the other person as if they are a child of God?" "Do my words help or hurt?" "In what ways can I make a difference?"

The word "love" in the Bible is about respect, kindness, wholeness, and wishing good for the other person's well-being. Let us love God with all that we are and share that love with others.

Let us pray:

*Gracious and loving God, you make us for each other, to live in loving community as friends, sons and daughters, sisters and brothers, wives and husband, partners and companions. Teach us to choose love that is committed and devoted; teach us like little children to wonder and to trust, that our loving may reflect the image of Christ. Amen.*

(Found at Text This Week under liturgies, Vanderbilt Divinity Library for today's gospel lesson)